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The rejection of Claims 1-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Miller, U.S. Patent No. 6,418,943 (hereinafter referred to as "Miller") is respectfully traversed.

Miller describes a dishwasher (200) with a soil separator and pump assembly (222) located in the sump (218) for recirculating wash liquid from the sump (218) through the tub (212). Wash liquid and entrained soils flow, therefore, through the secondary outlet (240) into the soil collector (270). As shown in Figure 4, the soil collector includes a main body (272) and a top panel (274). The main body (272) is a generally circular, cup-like member which is secured to the bottom wall (216) of the wash tub (212). The main body (272) includes an outer flange which forms a coarse grate through which wash liquid flows on its path toward the pump inlet (236). The main body (272) has a center opening or conduit (275) which receives fluid flow from the main outlet (238) of the pump chamber (232). A bearing hub (277) may be partially positioned in the center conduit (275) for directing wash liquid to the spray devices (224).

The main body further includes an inlet (276) for receiving wash liquid from the secondary outlet (240). The top panel (274) forms a top wall of the soil collector (270). The top panel (274) has a solid wall portion (281) which overlies the inlet (276). The solid wall portion (281) and a channel (283) in the main body (272) combine to form an inlet conduit or path (310), as shown in Figures 4 and 6. The top panel (274) further includes a plurality of openings (282) which are provided with filter screen panels (284). The portion of the top panel (274) which includes a plurality of openings (282) combines with the main body (272) for forming a soil separation channel (280), as shown in Figure 7.

The pressure generated by an overloaded or clogged filter screens (284) will cause the wash liquid flowing through conduit (310) to be redirected out of the soil collector (270) through the opening (316). The second outlet (316), therefore, provides a soil collector bypass system when the filter screens (284) are clogged.

Claim 1 recites a fine filter assembly for a dishwasher, the fine filter assembly including a filter body including "an inlet and an outlet, said inlet located substantially adjacent said outlet, and an extended flow path joining said inlet and said outlet".

9D-DW-19776
PATENT

Miller neither describes nor suggests a fine filter assembly for a dishwasher, the fine filter assembly including a filter body including an inlet and an outlet, the inlet located substantially adjacent the outlet, and an extended flow path joining the inlet and the outlet. Moreover, Miller neither describes nor suggests an inlet located substantially adjacent the outlet. Rather, wash liquid is received into the soil collector (270) through the inlet (276) and is directed to pass through the channel (283) in the main body (272). The wash liquid is directed to flow through the channel (283) and out the channel (283) into the soil separation channel (280) formed between the main body (272) and the top panel (274). (See Miller col. 5, lines 1-7). As shown in Figure 4 of Miller, the channel (283) is substantially elongate having an inlet (276) and an outlet that directs flow into the soil separation channel (280). The inlet (276) and outlet of the channel (283) are not substantially adjacent to each other. The second outlet (316) is an opening in the solid wall partition (281) of the top panel (274), as shown in Figure 5. The second outlet is a bypass opening in the event of clogging and not an outlet for the channel (283). In addition, second outlet (316) is not substantially adjacent to the inlet (276).

For the reasons set forth above, Claim 1 is submitted to be patentable over Miller.

Claims 2-8 depend, directly or indirectly, from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claims 2-8 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 2-8 are likewise patentable over Miller.

Claim 9 recites a fluid circulation assembly for a dishwasher system, the fluid circulation assembly including "a main pump assembly; a drain pump assembly in flow communication with said main pump assembly; and a fine filter assembly in flow communication with said main pump assembly and with said drain pump assembly, said fine filter assembly comprising a filter body comprising an inlet and an outlet, said inlet located substantially adjacent said outlet, and an extended flow path joining said inlet and said outlet".

Miller neither describes nor suggests a fluid circulation assembly for a dishwasher system, the fluid circulation assembly including a main pump assembly, a drain pump

9D-DW-19776
PATENT

assembly in flow communication with the main pump assembly, and a fine filter assembly in flow communication with the main pump assembly and with the drain pump assembly, the fine filter assembly including a filter body including an inlet and an outlet, the inlet located substantially adjacent the outlet, and an extended flow path joining the inlet and the outlet. Moreover, Miller neither describes nor suggests an inlet located substantially adjacent the outlet. Rather, wash liquid is received into the soil collector (270) through the inlet (276) and is directed to pass through the channel (283) in the main body (272). The wash liquid is directed to flow through the channel (283) and out the channel (283) into the soil separation channel (280) formed between the main body (272) and the top panel (274). (See Miller col. 5, lines 1-7). As shown in Figure 4 of Miller, the channel (283) is substantially elongate having an inlet (276) and an outlet that directs flow into the soil separation channel (280). The inlet (276) and outlet of the channel (283) are not substantially adjacent to each other. The second outlet (316) is an opening in the solid wall partition (281) of the top panel (274), as shown in Figure 5. The second outlet is a bypass opening in the event of clogging and not an outlet for the channel (283). In addition, second outlet (316) is not substantially adjacent to the inlet (276).

For the reasons set forth above, Claim 9 is submitted to be patentable over Miller.

Claims 10-16 depend, directly or indirectly, from independent Claim 9. When the recitations of Claims 10-16 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 9, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 10-16 are likewise patentable over Miller.

Claim 17 recites a dishwasher system including "a tub comprising a sump portion; a fluid circulation assembly in flow communication with said sump portion, said fluid circulation assembly including a fine filter assembly, said fine filter assembly comprising a filter body comprising an inlet and an outlet, said inlet located substantially adjacent said outlet, and an extended flow path joining said inlet and said outlet".

Miller neither describes nor suggests a dishwasher system including a tub including a sump portion, a fluid circulation assembly in flow communication with the sump portion, the fluid circulation assembly including a fine filter assembly, the fine filter assembly including a

9D-DW-19776
PATENT

filter body including an inlet and an outlet, the inlet located substantially adjacent said outlet, and an extended flow path joining said inlet and said outlet. Moreover, Miller neither describes nor suggests an inlet located substantially adjacent the outlet. Rather, wash liquid is received into the soil collector (270) through the inlet (276) and is directed to pass through the channel (283) in the main body (272). The wash liquid is directed to flow through the channel (283) and out the channel (283) into the soil separation channel (280) formed between the main body (272) and the top panel (274). (See Miller col. 5, lines 1-7). As shown in Figure 4 of Miller, the channel (283) is substantially elongate having an inlet (276) and an outlet that directs flow into the soil separation channel (280). The inlet (276) and outlet of the channel (283) are not substantially adjacent to each other. The second outlet (316) is an opening in the solid wall partition (281) of the top panel (274), as shown in Figure 5. The second outlet is a bypass opening in the event of clogging and not an outlet for the channel (283). In addition, second outlet (316) is not substantially adjacent to the inlet (276).

Claim 17 is therefore submitted to be patentable over Miller.

Claims 18-20 depend, directly or indirectly, from independent Claim 17. When the recitations of Claims 18-20 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 17, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 18-20 likewise are patentable over Miller.

For the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 102 rejection of Claims 1-20 be withdrawn.

9D-DW-19776
PATENT

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, all the claims now active in this application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

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APR 25 2003
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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: Hegeman et al.

Serial No.: 09/742,548

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For: DISHWASHER FINE FILTER
ASSEMBLY WITH FULL
DRAIN SLOPE

Art Unit: 1746

Examiner: Perrin, Joseph

OFFICIAL

APR 25 2003
EXAMINED

SUBMISSION OF MARKED UP CLAIMS AND PARAGRAPHS

Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

In furtherance of the response to the Office Action dated January 29, 2003 submitted herewith, Applicants hereby submit marked up versions of the amendments therein:

IN THE CLAIMS

4. (Once Amended) A fine filter assembly in accordance with Claim 3 said flow path substantially helical between said inlet [first end] and said outlet [second end].

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